

II. Remarks

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-30 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 29, and 30 are independent.

The undersigned and Applicants' Canadian representative, Mr. Omar Nassif, would like to thank Examiner Ho for the cordial and productive interview of September 17, 2003. The Examiner's helpful comments and suggestions were instrumental in preparing this response.

Claims 1-30 were rejected as being anticipated by Marotta et al. (6,261,305) under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), for the reasons noted at pages 2-4 of the Office Action. Applicants respectfully traverse all art rejections.

As discussed at the interview, each of the independent Claims 1, 29, and 30 recites a novel combination of structure and/or steps whereby a second expandable portion is expandable from a second, unexpanded state to a second expanded state upon expansion of the first expandable portion. Importantly, **the second expandable portion covers a greater surface area in the second expanded state than in the second unexpanded state.** Further, each claim recites a covering material having a first surface area disposed over a second surface area of the second expandable portion, where the first surface area is greater than the second surface area in the second unexpanded state of the second expandable portion. As discussed at the interview, since none of the art of record in this case (including Marotta) discloses such a combination of

features, it is respectfully submitted that the claimed invention is fully patentable over the cited art.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that this application is now in condition for allowance, and a Notice thereof is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 625-3500. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,



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